

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Final Office Action dated December 7, 2005 in reference to the above-identified application. The Examiner has set a shortened statutory period for response to this action to expire three (3) months from the mailing date of the communication making this response due March 7, 2006.

In that office action claims 1-8, 10-34, 36, and 37 were indicated as pending. Applicant believes that claims 38 and 39 should also be listed as pending as they are listed in the Office Action as being allowed. Of these claims 1, 10, and 31 were rejected as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) by U.S. Patent No. 4,159,631 to Lee (Lee '631). Claims 5, 6, 36, and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Lee '631. Claims 7, 8, 32, and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Lee '631 in view of Muhmel et al. (DE 197 53 956).

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiners acknowledgement that claims 12-30, 38, and 39 are allowed and that claims 2-4, 11, and 34 all contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Final Office Action lists claim 22 as being objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. However, Applicant believes this to be an error (typographical) as claim 22 is listed as an allowable claim, and more importantly claim 22 depends from allowed claim 12.

In response to the Examiners indication of allowable subject matter the applicant has rewritten dependent claim 2 as new claim 40, which includes the limitations of independent claim 1. The dependency of claim 3 has been amended accordingly. Dependent claim 4 has been rewritten as new claim 41, which incorporates the limitations of independent claim 1. Dependent claim 11 has been rewritten as new claim 42, which incorporates the limitations of independent claim 1. Finally, dependent claim 34 has been rewritten as new claim 43, which incorporates the limitations of dependent claims 33 and 32 as well as independent claim 31. Accordingly, claims 2, 4, 11, and 34 have all been canceled.

In addition, the remaining claims (1, 5-8, 10, 31-33, 36, and 37) have been canceled thereby obviating the Examiners rejections to those claims. The Applicant hereby expressly reserves the right to reinsert these claims as the subject of a continuation application if so desired.

Due to this Amendment, a new filing fee calculation is provided, as follows:

Maximum Total Claims This Amendment		Total Claims Previously Paid For	
26	-	38	= 0 x \$ 25.00 = \$0.00
Total Independent Claims Per This Amendment		Maximum Independent Claims Previously Paid For	
8	-	6	= 2 x \$100.00 = \$200.00
Additional Filing Fee Due			\$200.00

Accordingly, our check no. 19052 in the amount of \$ 200.00 is enclosed. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the payment of the required fee(s) or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-1940.

Based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that the present application is in complete condition for allowance, and action to that end is courteously solicited. If any issues remain to be resolved prior to the granting of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney or agent for the Applicant at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.8

I hereby certify that the foregoing **AMENDMENT (13 pages), CHECK NO. 19052 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$200.00**, is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 6th day of February, 2006.



Marcie F. King